



NC Department of Health and Human Services

2023-2027 STATE AGING PLAN ONE-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

GOAL 1. Use policy, advocacy, education, and a multi-disciplinary approach to protect the rights of Older North Carolinians from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.



Ongoing efforts aim to enhance standards for the Long Term Care Community Advisory Committee (CAC) volunteers through new training standards established by the Administration for Community Living (ACL).



The legal services developer continues to build and foster partnerships with legal service providers throughout the state, ensuring that underserved and underrepresented communities have access to information that enables them to make informed decisions.



As of March 2024, 83 out of the 100 counties are represented by a delegate or alternative for the Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL).



The Division of Aging (DA) maintains relationships with key advocacy organizations, such as AARP and the NC Coalition on Aging (NCCOA); recently AARP and NCCOA held Advocacy Day on May 7th, during Older American Month.



DA continues collaborating with the NC Institute of Medicine (NCIOM) Healthy Aging taskforce to implement recommendations from "A Place to Thrive: Creating Opportunities to Age Well in North Carolina."

GOAL 2. Support programs and partnerships that improve the health and well-being of older North Carolinians.



On March 12, 2024, the Division of Aging, in partnership with the NC Dept. of Insurance (DOI) SHIIP, supported the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging (GAC) in convening the Summit to Coordinate Nutrition Services for Older Adults. This summit aimed to identify and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the current nutrition services landscape for North Carolina's older adults using the results-based accountability framework, facilitated by the NC Center for Health and Wellness (NCCHW). The summit was attended by 35 attendees, representing 12 different state policy level agencies.



From July 1, 2023 to January 17, 2024, ongoing educational technical assistance on general and medical transportation options were provided to over 300 people.



Quarterly meetings led by DA are coordinated with Healthy Aging NC (HANC) and Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Aging Specialists to promote best practices for data collections and maintain high-fidelity efforts. These meetings also strategize ways to increase participation in evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention (EBHP/DP) programs. Additional meetings are scheduled for small groups and one-on-one training sessions with the HANC Mon Ami coordinator.



DA staff serve on the NC Falls Prevention Coalition (NCFPC) steering committee, supporting annual events and promoting evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies for falls prevention. They also help implement the 2021-2025 Falls Prevention Strategic Action Plan and supported the launch of Standing Strong NC (SSNC) by NCCHW and NCFPC. NCFPC/SSNC hosted the 2024 summit on April 25, 2024, with 109 attendees, including 35 community members and older adults.



DA supports the NC Senior Center Alliance in the promotion of senior centers and advocacy efforts. Two Ann Johnson Institute trainings were held on October 10-12, 2023 (module 3) and April 23-25, 2024 (module 4).



The partnership with the NCCHW continues to expand the Social Bridging Project (SBP), supporting social connectedness for older adults throughout North Carolina. The Social Bridging NC website was launched in October 2023. Referrals from NCCARE360 have increased 250% since October 2023, and SBP now has participants in ten counties across the state.



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GOAL 3. Adopt an equity-centered housing lens approach to enable older adults to age in their place of choice with the appropriate services, supports, and housing opportunities.



The DA Housing Program funded 27 subrecipient organizations to provide Rapid Rehousing and Homelessness Prevention services, including rental assistance, rental arrears, security deposits, utility assistance, and housing case management, through Session Law 2021-180 Section 9A.4.



The NC Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Office provides monthly training to all subrecipients and other stakeholders on a variety of topics related to ESG program operations, HUD regulations, and general provision of homeless services. Additionally, the ESG Office holds monthly office hours for subrecipients and stakeholders, offering a regular opportunity to ask questions, address concerns, and receive technical assistance from both the office and other subrecipients.



The Targeting Program is a disability-neutral housing program in partnership with the NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) and the Division of Aging, serving individuals aged 18 and older with disabilities, low income, and a need for affordable housing. New properties are being added to the program, increasing the number of Targeting Units available. The Targeting Program keeps local providers informed as new properties are added, offering updated property-specific information for the individuals they serve.



The DA Housing Program collaborates with NCDHHS and its housing and service stakeholders to support the implementation of the NCDHHS Strategic Housing Plan and serves on the 'Housing Development' workgroup.

GOAL 4. Advance equity, accessibility, and inclusion through informal and formal caregiving support.



As of 2023, there are 7 respite categories and 10 supplemental categories offered. In FY24, 876 caregivers received respite services, and 858 caregivers received supplemental services funded by ARPA. In FY23, 1203 caregivers received 60,897 units of respite services, and 1422 caregivers received 26,888 units of supplemental services.

The DA Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) engages with the NC Caregiver Collaborative to prioritize the recommendations of the Raise Family Caregiver Report and develop an implementation strategy for advancing policy solutions for caregiving across the lifespan.



The NC Lifespan Respite Executive Team was awarded \$1.6 million over a four-year grant period. NC Lifespan has partnered with two new organizations, El Centro Hispano and AKALAKA, to award respite vouchers to underserved and historically marginalized populations.



The NC BOLD Action Team, consisting of about 30 stakeholders, strengthened community partnerships statewide, promoting dementia collaboration and Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) Road Map activities. The NC BOLD report was submitted to the CDC in May 2024, and a toolkit was launched to increase awareness and education about dementia risk reduction, early diagnosis, and caregiving.



DA continues to lead a dementia-friendly communities workgroup for community leaders interested in beginning or growing a dementia-friendly community. As of February 2024, 124 Dementia Friends Champions were trained. In partnership with the NC Dementia-Capable Coalition, work is underway to accomplish recommendations of the NC Dementia Capable State Plan, with a focus on Recommendations 2.3 and 5.2.



In collaboration with the AAAs, DA offers training to promote the expansion of participant-directed/person-centered models of providing care. In 2024, there are 18 HCI programs (8 using ARPA funding) operating. DA developed Chore, Enhanced Chore, and Shopping & Errands ARPA service codes to help address the level I Home Management wait lists.



DA supports the Division of Health Benefits (DHB) in expanding Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) service areas across the state and increasing the capacity of existing programs by disseminating informational resources. As of June 2024, the 11 PACE organizations are expanding into additional counties.



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GOAL 5. Incorporate innovative practices learned through COVID-19 and create reliable systems and infrastructures that will have the capacity to serve the growing aging population, all while recognizing the need for communication equity to foster involvement from all stakeholders.



Ongoing efforts are underway to conduct fiscal and programmatic monitoring to ensure that all COVID-19 related funds are expended as stipulated by ACL. This includes an in-depth ARPA services program evaluation to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.



Efforts are ongoing to educate other divisions about programs available through DA and how the division can assist through partnerships. This is achieved through presentations and the dissemination of brochures.



DA leadership convened an internal team to drive efforts to comply with the Older American Act (OAA) Final Rule by October 25, 2025.



The implementation of the NCDHHS Modernization Roadmap Plan is in progress, integrating Division of Aging data, processes, and applications in phases.



DA maintains ongoing collaboration and coordination with North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) to better assist older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers with emergency management and disaster preparedness planning, response, and recovery with communication equity.



Efforts are underway to develop All Ages, All Stages NC, a cross-sector, state-led multi-sector plan to transform the infrastructure and coordination of services for our rapidly aging population. A progress report was submitted to Governor Roy Cooper on May 2, 2024, one year after the signing of Executive Order 280. Efforts are underway to release the final plan and data dashboard by September 2024.

GOAL 6. Advance equity by supporting and encouraging older adults of all backgrounds and their support systems to access information that helps them make informed choices about support services at home or in the community.



In collaboration with the Office of People, Culture, and Belonging, DA led a DHHS-wide Ageism webinar in October 2023 and received the first ageism awareness day proclamation in 2023. DA is working to increase the knowledge and skills of staff about diversity, equity, and inclusion through the DAAS DEI council and Department DEI council efforts.



Through community inclusion and strengthened collaboration with public-private partnerships, such as businesses, training institutions, and AAAs, DA is working to increase awareness of and participation in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to reach the program's capacity.



DA has ongoing collaboration with Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) to identify ways to increase involvement of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind community in aging initiatives and programs.



DA partnered with the NC Center for Health and Wellness (NCCHW) to conduct focus groups with historically marginalized populations, with 77 older adults participating.



DA is collaborating with the Center for Digital Equity (CDE) to establish digital navigators across the 16 AAAs.